Strategy Research Project

THE RETROGRADE OF UNITED STATES MILITARY EQUIPMENT OUT OF IRAQ

BY

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USAWC CLASS OF 2009

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

1. REPORT DATE *(DD-MM-YYYY)*	**2. REPORT TYPE**	**3. DATES COVERED** *(From - To)*
09-03-2009	Strategy Research Project	

4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE
The Retrograde of United States Military Equipment out of Iraq

5a. CONTRACT NUMBER

5b. GRANT NUMBER

5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER

6. AUTHOR(S)
Colonel Michael A. Armstead

5d. PROJECT NUMBER

5e. TASK NUMBER

5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER

7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)
Colonel Benjamin Leitzel
Department of Military Strategy, Planning, and Operations

8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER

9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)
U.S. Army War College
122 Forbes Avenue
Carlisle, PA 17013

10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)

11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)

12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT
Distribution A: Unlimited

13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

14. ABSTRACT

The United States military has been in Iraq since our initial invasion in March of 2003, this commenced Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). Since that time units have deployed and redeployed in a continuous chain. With each deployment, units have brought and in most cases left their equipment in theater. That equipment is now being used as theater provided equipment. In addition, countless contractors have brought and or purchased equipment in order to accomplish their mission in Iraq as well. This mixing of deploying equipment and theater provided equipment has clearly been a success in arming our units for combat but the cost has been billions of dollars of equipment that is literally spread all over the country. We know that the United States military will not be in Iraq forever. In fact the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) which calls for US combat troops to withdraw from Iraq the by the end of 2011 has been agreed upon by both Iraq and the United States. Therefore, the question that must be answered is, how do we get all of this equipment and materiel out of Iraq? This SRP will look at how this will be accomplished...lock step and orderly.

15. SUBJECT TERMS
Vietnam, Desert Shield / Desert Storm, OIF, Disposal

16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			**17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT**	**18. NUMBER OF PAGES**	**19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON**
a. REPORT	**b. ABSTRACT**	**c. THIS PAGE**			**19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER** *(include area code)*
UNCLASSIFED	UNCLASSIFED	UNCLASSIFED	UNLIMITED	26	

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

THE RETROGRADE OF UNITED STATES MILITARY EQUIPMENT OUT OF IRAQ

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This SRP is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master of Strategic Studies Degree. The U.S. Army War College is accredited by the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, 3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104, (215) 662-5606. The Commission on Higher Education is an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the US Secretary of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

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ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Colonel Michael A. Armstead

TITLE: The Retrograde of United States Military Equipment out of Iraq

FORMAT: Strategy Research Project

DATE: 9 March 2009 WORD COUNT: 5526 PAGES: 26

KEY TERMS: Vietnam, Desert Shield / Desert Storm, OIF, Disposal

CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

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THE RETROGRADE OF UNITED STATES MILITARY EQUIPMENT OUT OF IRAQ

> You will not find it difficult to prove that battles, campaigns, and even wars have been won or lost primarily because of logistics…
>
> —General Dwight D. Eisenhower[1]

General Eisenhower got it right, logistics can win wars and it can also finish the campaign with a solid redeployment plan. We all know that it can be argued that the United States military is the greatest fighting force in the world. With a mission of winning the nations wars, the military continues to exceed expectations. Recent wars, such as Vietnam, Desert Storm, Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) demonstrate that battlefield success is dependent upon supplying our personnel with equipment in a timely manner. However, once the mission is complete all of the vast amount of equipment used to execute the mission must be removed from the operating area and brought back to the United States. This is no small task because in each of the above cited wars there were massive quantities of equipment scattered over those countries that had to be accounted for and retrograded.

If nothing is changed to the current retrograde plan the following could take place. The year is 2025 and there are over 75,000 troops still in Iraq trying to retrograde equipment out of the country. The troops continue to run into the same issues year after year, not enough trucks, environmental issues, no true plan for what to do with contractor-managed government- owned equipment, and finally the lack of a true command structure that identifies who is in charge of the operation and what authorities it possess. This has on many occasions led to stove pipe execution with a lack of coordinated efforts. According to the troops on the ground at the rate that this retrograde operation is being executed it will take 50 years to get it completed.

Think the above scenario is unlikely then the following excerpts from the United States Government Accounting Office (GAO) offer more supporting evidence. The US GAO report on the reposturing of U.S Forces in Iraq with regard to the retrograde of equipment states, “while efforts have been made to synchronize planning for reposturing, Department of Defense (DOD), US Central Command (CENTCOM), and the military services have not yet clearly established all of the roles and responsibilities for managing and executing the retrograde of equipment and materiel from Iraq.” The report goes on to say that, “Although CENTCOM has designated US Army Central (USARCENT) as the executive agent (EA) for synchronizing retrograde of materiel and equipment from the Iraqi theater of operations, no unified or coordinated structure exists to account for the roles of the variety of teams and units engaged in retrograde operations.”[2] This is a very disturbing revelation; however this trend can be turned around. The retrograde mission in Iraq can be successfully completed in an efficient manner. This paper will describe how the retrograde should be executed.

The United States military has successfully executed retrograde operations during both the Vietnam War and Operation Desert Storm. However, military leaders must now focus on a new war and associated retrograde mission in Iraq. According to DOD officials, US forces in Iraq will not be “drawn down” but rather “repostured.” Multi-National Forces Iraq (MNF-I) defines “reposture operations,” a non-doctrinal term, as “the realignment of forces, basing, and resources to adjust to changes in the operating environment.”[3] As of May 2008, there was no agreed-upon definition for retrograde as it applies to reposture planning. However, according to some proposed definitions the term generally refers to the evacuation of materiel and equipment from Iraq.[4] This paper

will use the term “retrograde” to mean the removal of military equipment from an operating area. With this definition in mind, this paper will examine retrograde operations in both Vietnam and Desert Storm to reveal lessons learned that can be applied in future campaigns. There has been a massive buildup of equipment to support OIF including contractor-managed, government-owned equipment, also known as “white equipment.” This paper will analyze the current policy and plan for moving 2.5 brigades’ of equipment and materiel out of Iraq each month.[5] It will recommend a proposed plan that relies heavily on equipment donations to foreign countries, redistributing equipment to Afghanistan, leaving equipment in country for future contingencies, and placing vast amounts of equipment in the Army Prepositioned Stocks (APS). It will also recommend a clearly defined organizational structure that lists all authorities. Furthermore, the current retrograde plan can be improved by implementing the best concepts from retrograde operations during previous wars. Keep in mind that under the proposed retrograde plan, more than half of the equipment currently in Iraq will never return to the Continental United States (CONUS).

The proposed retrograde plan will focus on the Army because it has the largest logistical footprint in Iraq. The majority of units, materiel, and equipment in the Iraqi theater belong to the Army with relatively few additional services’ units, materiel, and equipment. Marine Corps officials have stated that the Marines will use Army logistics systems and pipeline to enter and exit the Iraqi theater. In addition, DOD officials stated that the Air Force and Navy have much smaller logistical footprints in Iraq.[6] Finally, this paper will focus at both the strategic and operational levels of execution. There will be no discussions on how many support units, wash racks, Heavy Equipment Transporters

(HET), or other equipment will be required for execution. Policy changes to include the donation threshold for Foreign Excess Personal Property (FEPP), APS replenishment plan, Acquisition Cross Service Agreements (ACSA's), and other guidance changes required to successfully execute the proposed retrograde plan will be discussed.

Current Status of OIF

Following Operation Desert Storm in 1991, a 100-hour war during which US forces advanced approximately 190 miles into Iraq, it took approximately 14 months to redeploy most of the materiel and equipment out of the theater. Operation Iraqi Freedom began in March 2003, and since that time the United States has maintained a sizeable presence in Iraq, rotating forces into and out of the country in support of ongoing operations.[7] In 2008, there were approximately 149,400 DOD contractors and 147,400 US troops deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. DOD officials reported that these forces were located on approximately 311 installations, matured during 5 years of operations, with some installations more than 500 miles from Kuwait the primary inter-theater transportation hub in theater.[8] Most of the equipment used by US troops in Iraq—approximately 80 percent according to DOD officials—is theater provided equipment. This pool of permanent stay behind equipment consists of previously deployed unit materiel, and equipment issued from APS, and items purchased specifically for OIF. Although much of this equipment has remained in Iraq as units rotate in and out, the current retrograde plan calls for significant amounts to be brought back to the United States if and when there is a decrease in the size of US forces in Iraq. As of March 2008, this pool of theater provided equipment totaled approximately 173,000 major end items such as High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled

Vehicles (HMMWV) and Mine Resistant Armor Protected (MRAP) vehicles, worth approximately $16.5 billion. The retrograde process for returning these items to the United States will be a massive and expensive effort.[9] Therefore, this paper will propose an alternative to returning vast amounts of equipment to the CONUS. It is essential that the DOD consider alternatives to the retrograde of all equipment. In addition, the Secretary of Defense (SecDef) should appoint one individual to lead this effort and assign the appropriate level of authority to ensure mission accomplishment.

The buildup of units and equipment for OIF was an enormous success. The Army utilized its APS equipment to meet the needs of a rapid buildup of combat power to execute the mission. APS is strategically positioned vital war stocks that reduce the deployment response time of the Army. In 1998, the Army redesignated the Army War Reserve Program as the Army Prepositioned Stock Program.[10]

HQDA, Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations (DCSOPs) determined the need to preposition seven APS Brigade Sets, one exercise Brigade Set for Desert Spring (previously known as Intrinsic Action or the exercising of the plan for the defense of Kuwait) unit rotations, and nine Unit Sets (hospitals) of materiel at strategic locations. This enabled units to deploy from home station with minimal equipment.[11] Brigade Sets were documented as unmanned or units not associated with a specific Table of Organization and Equipment (TO&E). The TO&E is the equipping and manning document for a unit. APS equipment has a Unit Identification Code (UIC). This identifies them as a unit and establishes were equipment and personnel will be sent. Army Materiel Command (AMC) does the Unit Status Report (USR) on these sets since the majority of the materiel within the Brigade is under AMC management.[12] The objective

of the Chief of Staff Army APS management policy was to change the use and ownership of APS materiel from specific Combatant Commanders (CCDR) and theaters to a common user stockpile of equipment and supplies that can support the worldwide requirements of any warfighting CCDR. These stocks now fall under the broad heading of APS materiel and are grouped into five regions. APS-1 consists of CONUS based stocks, APS-2 stocks are stored in Europe, APS-3 stocks are prepositioned aboard ships, APS-4 stocks are located in the Pacific, and APS-5 covers Southwest Asia. The APS program encompasses prepositioned Brigade Sets, operational, and sustainment stocks.[13] This program clearly enabled the Army to meet a tight timeline as it prepared to execute OIF. The APS unit sets formed the basis of equipment that the 3rd Infantry Division, the main ground combat force, used to execute the mission. In addition to the 3rd Infantry Division, three other combat battalions also drew APS equipment. In total, 27 battalion size elements, to include all of the main battle tanks, infantry fighting vehicles and self-propelled artillery, and half of the rocket artillery systems that fought in OIF's major combat operations were issued from APS.[14]

The use of APS was critical during major combat operations of OIF. It played a key role in getting units set in an expeditious manner, and gave our political leaders a national instrument of power waiting in the wings to be utilized. Thus, this program must be enhanced so it will remain relevant into the 21st century. The proposed retrograde plan will place even more equipment in the APS by using equipment retrograded from Iraq. Currently there is a Headquarters Army plan to replenish the APS. However, the proposed retrograde plan calls for adding one additional Brigade Combat Set to all 5 APS sites. Adding these additional assets forward will give the Combatant Commander

more flexibility to execute full spectrum operations in his Area of Responsibility (AOR) by providing additional equipment that can be used for a wide range set of contingencies.

The final aspect to be discussed in the build up for initial operations phase was the use of contractors to execute the mission. The United States Army's Logistics Civil Augmentation Program (LOGCAP) is an initiative to manage the use of civilian contractors who perform services in support of DOD missions during times of war and other mobilizations. It was established in December of 1985, and it is administered by AMC.[15] Kellogg, Brown & Root (KBR) is the primary contractor in Iraq and owns most of the contractor-acquired, government-owned equipment. Contractors are an integral part of the Army's ability to provide world class logistics to its Soldiers. As stated previously, there are more than 149,000 government contractor personnel in Iraq.[16] However, each of these contractors has acquired millions of dollars worth of equipment. Furthermore, the Army has determined that approximately 85 percent of all contractor-acquired, government-owned property in Iraq should be transferred, sold, or scrapped in Iraq once it is declared excess.[17]

Historical Retrograde Operations

The Army encountered materiel retrograde issues in several wars. As early as 1847, following the war with Mexico, an Army bulletin mentioned property disposal as an issue that must be given the highest priority. [18] The disposition of materiel at the end of World War I became an issue when the Army had vast amounts of equipment, but no real need for it. Also, after the hostilities of World War II ended in August 1945, the Army had huge inventories of equipment scattered over Europe and the Pacific.[19] A lot

of these items were abandoned in place on many islands in the Southwest Pacific, but eventually most of it was recovered and used during the Korean War.[20] Experts have written that the problem of retrograde came up again once hostilities ceased in Korea. However, the issue was mitigated by sending large amounts of equipment to US bases in Japan.[21]

The first US combat troops arrived in Vietnam in 1965. Although some historians debate the official start of the Vietnam War for the United States,[22] it is clear that US troops serving in Vietnam brought tremendous amounts of equipment into the country. During the height of the Vietnam War, in 1968, there were 537,377 troops on the ground.[23] Troop strength began to drop significantly in 1970. However, planning for the retrograde and disposal of Army equipment began the year prior, but went into high gear during this time. Army logisticians retrograded and disposed of over two million tons of equipment and materiel from Vietnam.[24] This equipment was identified early while combat operations were still ongoing.

The Army logisticians during the Vietnam War refused to be caught unprepared as in previous wars. Steps were taken to ensure that all materiel and equipment were identified, classified and documented. Special programs were set up to create space in depot areas and large quantities of material were moved offshore to be repackaged for return to the Army inventory.[25] The Department of the Army logisticians under the control of the Continental Army Command and AMC instituted a program entitled STOP/SEE to reexamine the need for items on order and to stop shipments if the requirements no longer existed. Furthermore, excess equipment and materiel was screened and used to fill the needs of the Republic of Vietnam armed forces.[26] This

program was similar to our efforts to equip the Iraqi forces. Major programs were established like the Pacific Utilization Redistribution Agency (PURA) in Okinawa to insure that unneeded serviceable equipment and supplies were moved to the Pacific and CONUS.[27] If the equipment wasn't needed in the CONUS, it was reported to the Defense Logistics Services Center, Battle Creek, Michigan, now the Defense Reutilization and Marketing Service (DRMS), for screening throughout the DOD. Materiel and equipment that was unclaimed by DOD agencies became excess and issued to the Military Assistance Program and other eligible programs.[28]

Retrograde operations in Vietnam proved to be a success. In fact as more and more units redeployed, tons of equipment became surplus to in-country requirements. However, despite the turnover in trained personnel and dwindling manpower available, nearly two million short tons of equipment, with an estimated value of approximately $5 billion had been moved out of Vietnam by June 1972.[29] Every effort was made to ensure that the Federal Government was given ample chance to obtain any of this materiel or equipment for their use. Agencies like the US Agency for International Development, Trust Territories of the Pacific, General Services Administration (GSA), and the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, all benefitted from retrograded equipment and materiel.[30]

The Disposal Agency, Vietnam was another agency that supported the retrograde operation. Its mission was to prepare for and sell all property no longer needed. In addition to equipment, the agency negotiated the sale of scrap metal, trash, wood, garbage, waste oil, and rubber.[31] According to records the scrap inventory in Vietnam was reduced from 260,000 to 100,000 short tons in 1972. The value of that

scrap was in excess of $87 million of which the U.S received a 20 percent return. Most of those sales went to Vietnam, Singapore, the Philippines, and Japan.[32]

Keep in mind that despite all of these great efforts, vast amounts of equipment was still left behind.[33] However, the overall success of retrograde operations during the Vietnam War cannot be overlooked, and must be attributed to great prior planning, good coordination and communication among all Federal Government Agencies, and the work of a lot of great logisticians. The lesson learned from this operation is that providing more knowledge and visibility of retrograde items to the greatest number of organizations will result in increased redistribution and sales.

According to Lieutenant General William G. Pagonis, (USA Retired), from a logistician's perspective the most difficult phase of a war is the final one: redeployment.[34] However, if history is any indicator, Lieutenant General Pagonis took the difficult task of retrograde operations and executed it nearly flawlessly following the end of Operation Desert Storm. This retrograde action, code name Desert Farewell, began almost at the instant the ceasefire accords were signed in Safwan.[35]

Lieutenant General Pagonis was the "Kingpin" for this operation which he described as someone who could assess the imperatives of each of the functional areas and decide upon a solution that best supports the mission.[36] As the Commander of the 22nd Support Command (SUPCOM), Lieutenant General Pagonis had both the 1st and 2nd Corps Support Commands' under his command and control (C2) to execute Operation Desert Farewell, the redeployment and retrograde phase following Operation Desert Storm. In addition, Lieutenant General Pagonis also partnered with the AMC to execute this mission. To meet the mission of accountability of every piece of equipment,

AMC established the Saudi Arabian Retrograde and Redistribution Facility (SAARF) at King Khalid Military City.[37] This facility was responsible for retrograding reparable major assemblies, but it morphed into the location that handled all general supplies.[38]

With both C2 and a centralized location established for retrograde operations the execution of Desert Farewell began to take shape. Some of the biggest issues to come from this operation were mainly in the operational and tactical arenas. The biggest of these issues was transportation. There were never enough trucks, especially HETs. This critical vehicle with its winch capability can pull disabled M1 tanks out of the mud and onto its deck for follow on transport. In addition, a shortage of material handling equipment (MHE) was identified; equipment such as forklifts, mobile cranes, and Rough Terrain Cargo Handling equipment (RTCH). Despite the logistics challenges, retrograde operations went into high gear.

The plan for Operation Desert Farewell was the rapid redeployment of both troops and equipment to the CONUS and Europe. The plan was executed in two stages. Stage I, the redeployment of personnel, was executed as fast as humanly possible.[39] Included in this stage was the redeployment of two corps' worth of combat power—the tanks, artillery, and ammunition needed to ensure their rapid reconstitution in Europe and the United States. This involved the movement of some 365,000 troops, along with their equipment, in less than ninety days (a self-imposed time).[40] Stage II was the total accountability of every piece of materiel and equipment used during the war. Each piece had to be segregated, cleaned, and loaded onto vessels and planes for movement to predetermined destinations.[41] Although the timeline for Stage II was much longer than Stage I, it definitely proved to have its own form of unique challenges.

Lieutenant General Pagonis was bond by an agreement President George H.W. Bush made with King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, that no military personnel or equipment will be left in their country after operations ceased.[42] Lieutenant General Pagonis based his plan around that guidance and he went on to further add that there would be no American presence in Saudi Arabia after January 1992.

Operation Desert Farwell's execution hinged on two very important initiatives; centralized planning and decentralized execution.[43] These two initiatives along with what Lieutenant General Pagonis calls constant communication were the keys to the success of Operation Desert Farewell. Thus, in January 1992 Operation Desert Farwell ended the US mission in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Iraq as the final stage of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. The retrograde operation was a complete success. Furthermore, there are some key lessons learned that can be taken away from this operation. First, the US military must get C2 right and everyone needs to know who is in charge. Planning must be centralized and execution decentralized. Finally, policy from the highest levels must be understood by all personnel. In this case it was President George H. W. Bush's guidance that no military equipment or personnel will be left in Saudi Arabia once the operation ended. Lieutenant General Pagonis and his team executed that mission nearly flawlessly. Military leaders and historians should draw on the success of Operation Desert Farewell for years to come to illustrate how retrograde operations should be conducted. This paper's proposed retrograde plan will utilize lessons learned from Operation Desert Farewell to enhance mission effectiveness of future retrograde operations.

Current Retrograde Operations

There are clear strategic implications with regard to the retrograde of equipment and materiel out of Iraq. The first of these implications is the fact that a Status of Forces Agreement or (SOFA) was recently signed between the United States and the Government of Iraq. The SOFA took effect on January 1, 2009.[44] However, the SOFA does not include a total withdraw of equipment from Iraq. In fact in Article 7 reads as follows;

> The United States Forces may place within agreed facilities and areas and in other temporary locations agreed upon by the Parties defense equipment, supplies, and materiel that are required by the United States Forces in connection with agreed activities under this Agreement. The use of storage of such equipment shall be proportionate to the temporary missions of the United States Forces in Iraq pursuant to Article 4 of this Agreement and shall not be related, either directly or indirectly, to systems of weapons of mass destruction (chemical weapons, nuclear weapons, radiological weapons, biological weapons, and related waste of such weapons). The United States Forces shall control the use and relocation of defense equipment that they own and are stored in Iraq. The United States Forces shall ensure that no storage depots for explosives or munitions are near residential areas, and they shall remove such materials stored therein. The United States shall provide the Government of Iraq with essential information on the numbers and types of such stocks.[45]

This clearly means that the US can leave equipment behind in places that are agreed upon by both parties. I concur with General Barry McCaffrey's (USA Retired), statement in his 4 November 2008 After Action Report on his visit to Iraq and Kuwait 31 October – 6 November 2008, "We should assume that the Iraqi government will eventually ask us to stay beyond 2011 with a residual force of trainers, counter-terrorist capabilities, logistics, and air power. (General McCaffrey's estimate is—perhaps a force of 20,000 to 40,000 troops).[46] Therefore, the current retrograde plan to setup three Forward Deployed Equipment Sites (FDES) in Iraq is in compliance with the SOFA. Plans call for these sites to be located in Mosul, Al Asad Air Base, and Baghdad

International Airport. Furthermore, these sites will be maintained by AMC and will employ local Iraqis. This obviously will serve two purposes; the first purpose is to set up contingency equipment sites that the US forces can use if contingencies arise in Iraq or the region. The second purpose is to increase employment opportunities for the local Iraqi population. Thus, it will help spur economic growth in the areas where the FDES will be located. Therefore, we can meet President Obama's policy guidance of getting out of Iraq while still allowing for strategic options should there be future issues in the Middle East. A military option will be readily available.

> Logistics...in the broadest sense, the three big M's of warfare: material, movement, and maintenance. If international politics is 'the art of the possible,' and war is its instrument, logistics is the art of defining and extending the possible. It provides the substance that physically permits an army to live and move and have its being.[47]

Recommendations

A lot has been written on retrograde to this point. This paper has covered where we are, how we got there, what history tells us about this issue, and finally why we need a sound plan. Next, this paper will focus on the execution of the proposed retrograde plan. It will examine the current retrograde plan's equipment turn-in guidance, who should be in charge, what policy changes need to take effect, and finally analyze the basic concept of the operation for the proposed retrograde plan.

The current retrograde plan calls for USARCENT to be the Executive Agent (EA) for the operation, but there is no mention of authorities.[48] This ambiguous title must be changed. The USARCENT should be in charge of the retrograde of equipment out of Iraq and have Operational Control (OPCON) over all units responsible for retrograde operations. USARCENT is the Army Service Component Command and it controls the

units and the battle space where the retrograde operations will occur. In addition, it has Title X authority over these units as well. Therefore, it must be the central point of contact for this entire operation. USARCENT's overall visibility of this process from start to finish make it uniquely qualified to execute this mission. MNF-I and USARCENT must fight the "berm mentality" that separates Iraq from Kuwait and work together to ensure success.

The proposed retrograde plan must draw from the lessons learned during Operation Desert Farewell. Lieutenant General Pagonis was dubbed the "Kingpin," a leader who could assess the imperatives of each of the functional areas and decide upon a solution that best supports the mission.[49] Therefore, a "Kingpin" should be used for the proposed retrograde plan. My recommendation is that this position be filled by an Army Lieutenant General who has a logistics background. The "Kingpin" should have exclusive authority to make informed decisions based upon the best course of action to execute the retrograde mission. Furthermore, he or she should be empowered to exercise this authority without constraint. The title for this individual should be Director of Retrograde Operations Iraq (DROI). The DROI must have OPCON of all Theater Property and Retrograde Support Teams in the AOR. The DROI should be the forward representative for the Deputy under Secretary of Defense for Logistics and Materiel Readiness DUSD (L&MR). In addition, he should command USARCENT's logistics staff. The DROI should also be augmented with a robust staff that compliments the USARCENT's staff.

The chain of command for the DROI should be OPCON to USCENTCOM with Direct Coordination to the Office of the Secretary of Defense. In addition, the DROI

should lead of an interagency working group (General Officers and SES equivalent representatives) that will consist of; MNF-I (Readiness & Sustainment), AMC, the Defense Logistics Agency, Headquarters Department of the Army and US Marine Corps, USAID, Department of State, Department of Homeland Security, and the Defense Security Cooperation Agency. This concept worked well during retrograde operations in Vietnam because of the enhanced visibility of retrograde equipment to other US government agencies outside of the DOD. The DROI should be in position for not less than eighteen months to ensure consistent planning and execution.

The proposed retrograde plan must have policy changes implemented in order for it to be properly executed. Policy changes are needed in the following areas; Foreign Excess Personal Property (FEPP), the Army Preposition Stocks (APS) replenishment plan, and Acquisition and Cross Service Agreements (ACSA's).

The first of these policy changes deals with FEPP. FEPP applies to the disposition of excess, surplus, and other property as authorized. Personal property (including scrap) shall be disposed of in a manner that ensures maximum use to satisfy valid needs, permits authorized donations, obtains optimum monetary return to the US Government for property sold, protects the environment, and minimizes the need for abandonment or destruction. In other words all of the equipment or materiel that was used to operate and maintain the various Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) can be donated without regard to dollar amount. The current policy is that items donations to Iraq exceeding $10,000 in acquisition value must be approved by DUSD (L&MR).[50] My recommendation is that no limit be set on this value because by definition these items are obsolete, excess to global military needs, or not cost effective to retrograde.[51] This

is important because it will speed the process of turning over bases to the Iraqi's, enhance the retrograde process, and can be a diplomatic tool that local commanders can use to donate items to the local populace and continue to win hearts and minds.

The second recommended policy change is with regard to the replenishment of APS (which was described earlier in this paper). Currently there is an APS Strategy 2015 that calls for restructuring the APS fleets to a modular configuration. To improve this strategy one additional BCT should be added per APS fleet. That results in an additional four BCT's. In addition, a Sustainment Brigade set should be added to APS-2 and APS-4. These changes will give Combatant Commanders more flexibility when employing forces as well as decrease the time for building combat power.

The final policy change will modify ACSAs. An ACSA provides the basic framework for cooperation in military logistic matters. This important international agreement provides for the exchange of logistic support, supplies and services on a reimbursable basis. It is focused on logistical support. ACSAs authorize the loan or lease of equipment.[52] In order to support this retrograde plan, ACSAs should be modified to include donations not just loans of equipment. This occurs only if it is determined that the donation of this equipment will enhance our national security and increase of interoperability with the recipient country. Combat equipment should be donated or loaned as well. The precedent was set for this with the pending transfer of 240 US M1 Tanks to the Iraqi Army.[53] This change alone will free up critical transportation assets as well as enhance the US security cooperation strategy.[54]

The current retrograde plan for the disposition of excess contractor-acquired, government-owned equipment is a good one. However, it can be improved with the

addition of all contractor-acquired, government-owned equipment, not just excess equipment. The DOD should leverage this equipment to assist the Government of Iraq (GoI) and other foreign governments that share US interests, and might benefit from this equipment. Just like all of the equipment and materiel coming out of Iraq, it should be aggressively managed to transfer, sell, donate or scrap all of this equipment.

After determining who will be in charge of this plan and what policy changes are needed to execute this plan, it is necessary to explain how the plan will be executed. The DROI and the interagency working group will be the key components of this operation. The plan will be executed in three phases. The first phase will require all retrograded materiel be electronically passed, using the system of record, to the interagency working group to gain a baseline common operating picture. The phase starts as soon the DROI and interagency working group is established. The second phase starts upon notification from the President and SecDef that Reposturing of Forces in Iraq has been authorized. Once a unit is given the order to begin reposturing all equipment and materiel, data will be sent electronically to the DROI and interagency working group to determine its final destination. There are seven possible destinations for retrograded equipment; remain in Iraq to be used by GoI, disposed of in country, redistributed to Afghanistan, sent back to the CONUS, placed in APS, donated to ACSA member countries, or placed in one of the Forward Deployed Equipment Sites. However, keep in mind that at a minimum seven BCT sets and three Sustainment Brigade sets will either go into APS (four BCT sets and two Sustainment Brigade sets), or into Forward Deployed Equipment Sites (three BCT sets and one Sustainment Brigade set).

In summary, the retrograde of equipment and materiel out of Iraq will be one of the defining moments for the US armed forces. OIF has been one of the United States' longest wars. We moved over 173,000 major end items and countless numbers of other materiel to Iraq. This is no small task and it will take "out of the box" thinking and execution to accomplish the mission. USARCENT is well equipped to be in charge of this mission, but they must have assistance and the authorities to execute. In addition, history tells us that this should be a synchronized effort led by a Three Star General dubbed the "Kingpin" who has been empowered by the SecDef to make decisions on retrograde based upon strategic direction and national interests. Furthermore, history dictates the establishment of a strong interagency working group that will assist the "Kingpin" in not only determining where equipment can be redistributed to support our national interests, but who can also assist with opening diplomatic doors when necessary. Only this kind of effort will ensure that the retrograde of equipment out of Iraq is efficiently and effectively accomplished.

Endnotes

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